

Pittsburgh SciTech 6-12

Student Handbook 2026-2027

Table of Contents

SUPERINTENDENT’S WELCOME	2
PRINCIPAL’S WELCOME	3
SCHOOL INFORMATION	5
VISION AND MISSION	6
COMMUNICATION PROCEDURES	7
BELL SCHEDULES	8
SCHOOL CALENDAR	13
ATTENDANCE, TARDINESS, AND EARLY DISMISSALS	14
ACADEMICS	19
ACADEMIC INTEGRITY	29
ATHLETICS/EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES	32
DRESS CODE	42
ELECTRONIC DEVICES	43
GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS	45
STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES	47
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY/ACCEPTABLE USE	49
STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES	50
STUDENT EXPECTATIONS/PROCEDURES	52
VISITORS & FAMILY ENGAGEMENT POLICY 1004	57
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	60
APPENDIX	67

SUPERINTENDENT'S WELCOME

Dear Pittsburgh Public Schools Parents, Students, and Families,

Welcome to the 2026-2027 school year! Whether you are joining Pittsburgh Public Schools for the first time or returning for another exciting year, I am honored to welcome you to a community committed to helping every student learn, grow, and thrive.

At Pittsburgh Public Schools, we believe every student deserves access to a high-quality education in a safe, supportive, and inclusive learning environment. Our dedicated educators and staff are committed to preparing students for success in college, career, and life by fostering curiosity, creativity, critical thinking, and a lifelong love of learning.

This school handbook is an important resource designed to help you navigate the school year. Inside, you will find valuable information about District policies, school expectations, student supports, attendance, academic programs, extracurricular opportunities, health and safety procedures, and ways to stay connected with your school community. I encourage every family to review this handbook together and refer to it throughout the year.

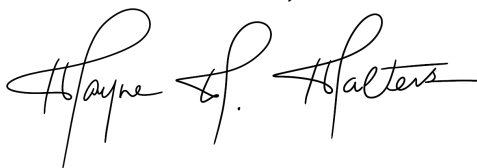
A successful school year is built on strong partnerships between schools, families, and the community. We know that students achieve more when the adults in their lives work together to support their learning and well-being. We invite you to stay engaged by attending school events, participating in Parent School Community Council (PSCC) meetings, communicating regularly with your child's teachers, and taking advantage of the many opportunities to share your voice and partner with us.

As we continue implementing our PPS Future-Ready Plan, we remain focused on creating learning environments where every student feels welcomed, valued, supported, and inspired to reach their full potential. Together, we are building stronger schools and brighter futures for every child.

Thank you for entrusting Pittsburgh Public Schools with your child's education. We look forward to a school year filled with learning, growth, achievement, and meaningful connections.

On behalf of the Board of Public Education and the entire Pittsburgh Public Schools team, welcome to an outstanding school year!

Yours in Education,



Superintendent, Pittsburgh Public Schools



PRINCIPAL'S WELCOME

Dear Pittsburgh Science & Technology Academy Families,

Welcome to the 2026–2027 school year! I am excited to welcome our students and families back to SciTech for another year of learning, growth, and community.

As we prepare for the year ahead, our focus is increasingly clear: to create a SciTech experience that challenges students academically while developing the independence, responsibility, and confidence they need to be successful here and beyond. Students do not have to arrive as the most organized, the most confident, or knowing exactly what they want to do in the future—we help them develop those skills. We do ask that they come ready to engage in their learning, make responsible choices, seek support when needed, and take increasing ownership of their success.



Dr. Johnson, School Principal

The SciTech Difference

SciTech offers an educational experience unlike any other school in Pittsburgh Public Schools. Middle school looping, an accelerated science sequence, science concentrations, block scheduling, Executive Experience, and extensive opportunities for enrichment and student leadership are all intentionally designed to prepare students for increasing levels of independence and academic challenge.

Inside our classrooms, we will continue strengthening our shared vision for GLEAM—Grade-Level, Engaging, Affirming, and Meaningful instruction. We are also strengthening Advisory to intentionally develop the organization, study skills, communication, goal setting, and self-advocacy students need to thrive at SciTech and beyond.

Clear Expectations. Strong Partnership

Families will notice a significantly updated 2026–2027 Student & Family Handbook. The handbook has been redesigned to provide clearer information about how SciTech works, what students and families can expect from us, and what we expect from our students. Updates include academics and grading, attendance, hall passes and student movement, student behavior, academic integrity, student supports, family engagement, and student opportunities.

I strongly encourage families to review the handbook with their student. Our September Parent School Community Council (PSCC) meeting will be dedicated to reviewing the changes in detail and answering family questions.

Our commitment remains simple: We do, so they can. We will provide rigorous learning experiences, meaningful opportunities, caring relationships, clear expectations, and the support our students need to grow. We ask our students and families to partner with us in that work.

I look forward to an incredible 2026–2027 school year!
Dr. Shavonne Johnson
Principal, Pittsburgh Science & Technology Academy

Important Information for the Start of School:

First Day of School: Monday, August 24, 2026

Doors open at 7:05 AM; school starts at 7:40 AM

Grades 6–9 enter on Thackeray Street; Grades 10–12 enter on Bouquet Street

Cell Phones:

On the first day only, students may keep their phones through arrival and turn them in during homeroom. Starting day two, all students will turn in phones upon arrival to their 6th period teacher’s designated cell phone box.

Student Transportation

- Middle and high school students ride Pittsburgh Regional Transit
- New students will receive a student ID/bus pass. Returning students must bring last year’s ID.
- PRT provides free rides for the first week of school while waiting for new IDs.

Student Dismissal

- Dismissal is at 2:40 PM (Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri) and 1:40 PM on Wednesdays.
- Students exit from Thackeray Street, Bouquet Street, or the parking lot doors.

Back to School Night

Thursday, August 20th | 4:30–6:30 PM

We hope to see you there—it’s a great chance to meet your child’s teachers, reconnect with other families, and learn more about what’s ahead.

Documents in this Mailing Include

- Links to District and school-based back to school forms
- Welcome letters from your child’s teachers and the Student Services Department
- Annual Title I Invitation Letter & PSSC flyer
- Bell schedules and Compact of Understanding
- District Future-Ready Facilities Plan letter

Dr. Shavonne Johnson

Principal, Pittsburgh Science & Technology Academy

SCHOOL INFORMATION



Sci-Tech International Studies Academy 6-12

107 Thackeray Ave, Pittsburgh, PA 15213

Phone: 412-529-7620

Fax: 412-622-5991

Office Email: scitech@pghschools.org

Website: pghschools.org/schools/6-12/scitech

2026-2027 Sci-Tech Staff Directory Link

[Click Here](#)

School Colors

Blue and white

School Mascot

Thundersharks

VISION AND MISSION

Mission

students to Dream, Discover and Design. Students will develop the skills and knowledge necessary for post-secondary success in all disciplines with a focus on the STEM-related fields of life science, environmental science, computer science or engineering. The school prepares students by providing a rigorous curriculum that requires advanced coursework and is characterized by excellent instruction, exploration, and a commitment to achievement. We believe that all students can succeed in advanced STEM coursework with the right amount of time and support.

Vision

Our vision is to make SciTech more than a school; we want to be a launching pad for ideas, for the architects of future technologies, and for success for every student.

What are the measurable outcomes for our students? At SciTech:

- Every student succeeds in advanced coursework
- Every student selects a specific postsecondary opportunity before graduation
- Every student demonstrates the ability to dream, to discover, and to design

The SciTech Difference

At Pittsburgh Science & Technology Academy, students benefit from experiences that are unique within Pittsburgh Public Schools:

- Grades 6-12 STEM Magnet Program
- Middle School Teacher Looping
- 80-Minute Block Scheduling
- Built-In Academic Support Periods
- One-to-One Student Technology
- Advanced Placement (AP) and College in High School (CHS) Opportunities
- Four STEM Concentration Pathways
- Executive Experience Internship Program
- Walking Field Trips and Oakland Partnerships
- Dedicated Postsecondary Preparation Courses
- Advisory Program Focused on Student Success
- Robust Clubs, Athletics, and Student Leadership Opportunities

These experiences are designed to ensure every student graduates prepared for college, career, and life.

COMMUNICATION PROCEDURES

Talking Points App

Talking Points is a service PPS has that enables SciTech teachers and staff to communicate with families via messaging. You will receive information via text message or through the Talking Points app. Download “TalkingPoints for Parents” in your app store! If you aren’t receiving our messages, please contact the our SDSS, Mrs. Saavedra at ysaavedra1@pghschools.org.

Communicating with Teachers

You can expect to receive regular communication from all teachers. If you need to initiate contact with a teacher, you can connect with a teacher by phone, email, or Talking Points. Teacher email addresses are included in the Staff Roster and teachers will provide additional contact information in their course syllabi. Please be sure that you have downloaded the TalkingPoints app.

SciTech Email Distribution List

This is the BEST way to stay informed with all things SciTech! Weekly emails and announcements are sent. Use this link <https://bit.ly/scitechemailssignup> OR scan the QR code to sign up for the SciTech email list.



SciTech Website

Find detailed information about SciTech at <https://www.pghschools.org/schools/6-12/scitech>. Some examples of information found on the website: course descriptions, staff directory, monthly student calendars, and much more!

Change of Address or Contact Information

If your address or contact information changes, please contact the SciTech SDSS, Mrs. Saavedra, at ysaavedra1@pghschools.org to update your information. She will provide details on the documentation needed to update student information.

BELL SCHEDULES

This section outlines the daily routines and procedures that help SciTech operate safely, efficiently, and consistently for all students.

The Pittsburgh Science & Technology Academy follows multiple bell schedules throughout the school year to support both in-person and e-learning instruction. The regular bell schedule is observed on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. On Wednesdays, students are dismissed one hour early, with the final period ending at 1:40 PM.

Regular Bell Schedule (M, T, TH, F)		Wednesday Bell Schedule (1 hour early dismissal)		Half Day Bell Schedule	
Staff Arrival	7:25 AM	Staff Arrival	7:25 AM	Staff Arrival	7:25 AM
Student Arrival and Breakfast	7:05 - 7:35	Student Arrival and Breakfast	7:05 - 7:35	Student Arrival and Breakfast	7:05 - 7:35
Period 1	7:40 – 9:00 (80 min)	Period 1	7:40 – 8:43 (63 min)	Period 1	7:40 – 8:28 (48 min)
Period 2	9:05 – 10:25 (80 min)	Period 2	8:48 – 9:51 (63 min)	Period 2	8:33 – 9:21 (48 min)
Period 3/ Homeroom	10:25 – 10:28 (3 min)	Period 3/ Homeroom	9:51 – 9:54 (3 min)	Period 3/ Homeroom	9:21 – 9:24 (3 min)
Grades 6-9 Lunch	10:33 – 11:03 (30 min)	Period 5	9:59 – 11:02 (63 min)	Period 5	9:29 – 10:17 (48 min)
Grades 6-9 Activity	11:08 - 11:48 (42 min)				
Grades 10-12 Activity	10:33 -11:13 (42 min)	Grades 6-9 Lunch	11:07 – 11:37 (30 min)	Period 6	10:22 – 11:10 (48 min)
Grades 10-12 Lunch	11:18 – 11:48 (30 min)	Grades 6-9 Advisory	11:42 – 12:31 (49 min)		
Period 5	11:53 – 1:13 (80 min)	Grades 10-12 Advisory	11:07 – 11:56 (49 min)	Student Dismissal	11:10 am *bagged lunch at the door
		Grades 10-12 Lunch	12:01 – 12:31 (30 min)	Staff Lunch	11:10 – 12:10
Period 6	1:18 – 2:40	Period 6	12:36 – 1:40		
Student Dismissal	2:40 PM	Student Dismissal	1:40 PM	Staff Professional Learning	12:10 – 3:25
Staff Dismissal	3:25 PM	Staff Dismissal	3:25 PM	Staff Dismissal	3:25 PM

Two-Hour Delay Regular Bell Schedule	Two-Hour delay Wednesday Bell Schedule	Midterms/Finals Bell Schedule		Remote Learning Schedule
Staff Arrival 7:25 AM	Staff Arrival 7:25 AM	Staff Arrival 7:25 AM		Teacher Time Remote Learning Set Up 7:40 – 8:40 (60 minutes)
Student Arrival and Breakfast 9:05 – 9:35	Student Arrival and Breakfast 9:05 – 9:35	Student Arrival And Breakfast 7:05 – 7:35		Period 1 8:45 – 9:45 (60 minutes)
Period 1 9:40 – 10:30 (50 min)	Period 1 9:40 – 10:17 (37 min)	Period 1 or 5 7:40 - 9:00 Final/ Midterm (80 min)		Period 2/3 9:50 – 10:50 (60 minutes)
Period 2 10:35 – 11:25 (50 min) Period 3/ Homeroom 11:25 – 11:28 (3 min)	Period 2 10:22 – 10:59 (37 min) Period 3/HR	Period 2 or 6 9:05 - 10:28 Final/ Midterm (80 min)		Lunch Time 10:55 – 11:25 (30 minutes)
Grades 6-9 Lunch 11:33 – 12:03 (30 min) 12:08 – 12:50 (42 min) Grades 6-9 Activity	Period 5 11:06 – 11:43 (37 min)	Activity or Advisory	10:33 - 11:10 (37 min)	Period 5 11:30 – 12:30 (60 minutes)
Grades 10-12 Activity 11:33 - 12:15 (42 min) Grades 10-12 Lunch 12:20 – 12:50 (30 min)	Grades 6-9 Lunch 11:48 – 12:18 (30 min) Grades 6-9 Advisory 12:23 – 12:58 (35 min)			Period 6 12:35 – 1:35 (60 minutes)
Period 5 12:55 – 1:45 (50 min)	Grades 10-12 Lunch 12:28 – 12:58 (30 min) Grades 10-12 Advisory 11:48 – 12:23 (35 min)			Parent contact Support Time 1:40 – 2:15 (35 minutes)
Period 6 1:50 – 2:40 (50 min)	Period 6 1:03 – 1:40 (37 min)			Teacher Time Afterschool Meetings 2:20 – 3:25 (65 minutes)
Student Dismissal 2:40 PM	Student Dismissal 1:40 PM			
Staff Dismissal 3:25 PM	Staff Dismissal 3:25 PM			

Arrival and Dismissal Procedures

Arrival Procedures

Doors open at 7:05 AM. First period begins promptly at 7:40 AM, and students are considered tardy if they arrive at first period after the 7:40 bell. Students in grades 6–9 must enter the building via the Thackeray Street entrance, while students in grades 10–12 must use the Bouquet Street entrance. All students will be required to pass through metal detectors and have their belongings searched upon entry. Once students arrive on campus, they must remain on school property until dismissal unless they have an approved early dismissal or on a school-sponsored field trip.

Dismissal Procedures

Student cell phones are stored in a locked container by their 6th period teacher throughout the school day. Cell phone bins are returned to classrooms prior to dismissal, and students receive their devices five minutes before the dismissal bell.

Dismissal occurs at 2:40 PM on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays and at 1:40 PM on Wednesdays. Students may be dismissed as walkers, parent pick-ups, PRT riders, or yellow school bus riders and are expected to follow all school dismissal procedures.

Cell Phone Collection

PPS POLICY 216

To support a focused learning environment, all students are required to turn in their cell phones upon entering the building each morning.

- Student cell phones are collected at the entrance and placed in their assigned 6th period teacher's designated cell phone bin. Tardy students will turn in cell phones to the main office upon their arrival.
- Cell phone bins are securely stored throughout the school day.
- Students may not possess or use a cell phone during the instructional day unless authorized by school staff. Students who bring multiple devices (cell phones, smart phones, or similar communication devices) are expected to turn in all devices upon arrival.
- Cell phone bins are returned to classrooms prior to dismissal, and students receive their devices approximately five (5) minutes before the dismissal bell. After the

dismissal bell, tardy students come to the main office and retrieve their cell phones from the tardy bins.

- Students who fail to turn in a cell phone or are found in possession of a cell phone during the school day will be subject to the following procedures:

Progress of Intervention

1st Violation of the cell phone policy

- Individual warning
- Referral
- Turn in phone immediately to the designated administrator.
- Phone call will be made and followed up with a Talking Point message.

2nd Violation of the cell phone policy

- Referral
- Phone will be confiscated by administration and a parent/guardian/ emergency contact listed in eSchools will be required to pick up the device.
- Student will be required to turn their phone(s) directly into Mr. Chambers upon arrival into the school building.

This schoolwide procedure ensures consistency, minimizes distractions, and supports student engagement throughout the school day.

If parents/guardians must reach their student in case of an emergency, they may call the main office. The message will be delivered to their child. Parents can also email their student at the student's school email address.

Bag Check & Security Screening

To ensure a safe learning environment, all student bags and belongings are subject to screening upon entry. The following items are prohibited on school property:

Weapons and Dangerous Instruments	Liquids
Any item that could inflict serious bodily harm or injury, including mace/pepper spray and lasers * Refer to Weapons and Dangerous instruments in PPS Code of Student Conduct	• There will be no open beverages permitted past the bag check point. All open beverages must be consumed before going through the metal detectors. Ex. Starbucks/Dunkin, open

Aerosol containers or sprays such as cologne, perfume, spray deodorant, etc.	soda/juice bottles, etc. Cups and containers of ice are permitted. • Liquid in unsealed containers.
Drugs/ Medications • Over-the-counter medications • Prescription drugs in their original containers NOT approved by the school nurse • Miscellaneous pills, or drugs not in the original container • See additional details in the PPS Code of Student Conduct	Tobacco Products and/or accessories • Cigarettes/ Chewing tobacco • Lighter/ Matches • Vaping Pens/Mods/Vaporizers
	Personal wireless-capable devices (this includes laptops, tablets, cellphones, glasses with cameras, etc. outside of school-issued devices will be collected and stored in the main office)

Breakfast and Lunch Program

Breakfast will be available for all students in the cafeteria from 7:05 - 8:30 AM. No snacks will be sold during breakfast and breakfast is not served on 2-hour delay days. Each student will have one 30 minute lunch period, except on half days where students receive a bagged lunch at dismissal. Students may bring their own lunch to school or receive a free lunch in the cafeteria. Students, families, or other outside guests are not permitted to have food delivered to the school.

School Closing and Delays

Sometimes it is necessary to close or delay the opening of school when extreme weather or building emergencies make it impossible to open. If you suspect that school might be delayed or closed due to inclement weather, please do not call the school.

Announcements will be made on television and radio stations. In addition, the school district will post all school closures and delays on the school district website www.pghschools.org. In the event of an in-person 2-hour delay, first period will begin at 9:40 AM. In the event of a shift to remote learning, first period will begin at 8:45 am.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

The 2026-2027 District Calendar can be found [HERE](#).

Event	Date
#PittsburghForPPS Back to School Event	8/17/2026
First Day of School: All Grades Except Kindergarten	8/24/2026
First Day of School: Kindergarten	8/27/2026
No School: Labor Day	9/7/2026
4th Annual Take a Child to School Day	9/17/2026
Half Day	9/18/2026
No School: Yom Kippur	9/21/2026
Q1 Interim Progress Report	10/6/2026
Parent-Teacher Conferences (6-12, 9-12, Special, South Hills, EHS)	10/12/2026
Parent-Teacher Conferences (Early Childhood, PreK-5, PreK-8, 6-8)	10/16/2026
Half Day	10/23/2026
No School: Election Day	11/3/2026
No School: Veterans Day	11/11/2026
Q1 Report Cards Distributed	
Half Day	11/20/2026
Thanksgiving Break 11/26/2026-11/27/2026	
Q2 Interim Progress Report	12/15/2026
Half Day	12/18/2026
Winter Break 12/24/2026-1/1/2027	
No School: MLK Day	1/18/2027
No School	1/19/2027
No School	1/20/2027
Q2 Report Cards Distributed	2/1/2027
Half Day	2/12/2027
Black Men Read	2/25/2027
Half Day	2/26/2027
Q3 Interim Progress Report	3/2/2027
Parent University	3/6/2027
No School: Eid al-Fitr	3/10/2027
Half Day	3/12/2027
Spring Break 3/22/2027-3/26/2027	
Women Who Lead	3/31/2027
Q3 Report Cards Distributed	4/15/2027
Q4 Interim Progress Report	5/12/2027
29th Annual Take a Father to School Day	5/14/2027
No School: Election Day	5/18/2027
No School: Memorial Day	5/31/2027
Breakfast of Champions	6/7/2027
Last Day of School	6/8/2027
Q4 Report Cards Distributed	6/17/2027

Testing Dates	
Keystone Exams Winter	1/4/2027-1/15/2027
PSSAs English Language Arts	4/26/2027-4/30/2027
PSSAs Math, Science, Make-ups	5/3/2027-5/7/2027
Keystone Exams Spring	5/17/2027-5/28/2028

School Board Meetings		
Agenda Review	Public Hearing	Legislative Meeting
8/19/2026	8/24/2026	8/26/2026
9/16/2026	9/22/2026	9/23/2026
10/21/2026	10/26/2026	10/28/2026
11/18/2026	11/23/2026	11/24/2026
12/16/2026	12/21/2026	12/23/2026
1/20/2027	1/25/2027	1/27/2027
2/18/2027	2/22/2027	2/24/2027
3/17/2027	3/29/2027	3/31/2027
4/20/2027	4/26/2027	4/28/2027
5/19/2027	5/24/2027	5/26/2027
6/23/2027	6/28/2027	6/30/2027
7/21/2027	7/26/2027	7/28/2027

ATTENDANCE, TARDINESS, AND EARLY DISMISSALS

Attendance Procedures

Regular attendance is one of the strongest predictors of student success. Students are expected to attend school every day, arrive on time, and remain in school for the full instructional day unless an approved absence or early dismissal has been granted.

Attendance is taken throughout the school day to ensure student safety and accurate reporting.

- Attendance is recorded during the first 10 minutes of every class period, including Activity and Advisory
- Homeroom attendance is monitored daily.
- Parents/guardians will receive an automated notification when a student is tardy or absent from school.

*Refer to Student Expectations/Procedures section for additional Activity/Advisory period expectations.

Reporting an Absence or Change in Attendance

Parents/guardians should notify the school whenever a student's attendance changes due to an absence, tardy, or early dismissal.

Absence notes may be submitted by emailing scitech@pghschools.org or by sending a written note to the main office.

All absence notes must include:

- Student name
- Date(s) of the absence
- Reason for the absence
- Parent/guardian signature and telephone number (for handwritten notes)

Email excuses must be submitted from the parent/guardian's email address, not the student's email account.

Notes must be received within three (3) school days of the student's return for the absence to be considered excused. If a note is not received within three (3) school days, the absence will be recorded as unlawful and unexcused. Parents/guardians may excuse up to

ten (10) absences per school year. After ten parent excuses, absences due to illness require documentation from a licensed healthcare provider.

Excused and Unexcused Absences

Examples of Excused Absences		Examples of Unexcused Absences	
Illness (doctor excuses will be required if there are an excessive amount of parent excused days)	Legal appointments including court summons	Oversleeping	Confusion around whether or not there was school
	Family emergency	Missing the bus	
Medical, dental, and behavioral health appointments	Religious holidays and instruction	Not feeling like coming to school	Parent/sibling illness
		Vacations/Out of town	Work or childcare
School-approved activities	Bereavement		

Early Dismissals

Requests for early dismissal must be submitted in writing, handwritten or emailed to scitech@pghschools.org, to the main office on the morning of the requested dismissal.

The request must include a telephone number where the parent/guardian can be reached for verification.

Excused Tardies and Early Dismissals

Parents/guardians may submit up to ten (10) written excuses per school year for student tardiness or early dismissal due to illness. Excuses must be submitted within three (3) school days to be considered excused.

Attendance Definitions

- **Excused Absence:** An absence supported by an approved written excuse and consistent with district attendance policy.
- **Unexcused Absence:** An absence for which no acceptable written excuse is received within three (3) school days.
- **Tardy:** Arriving after the posted start time for school or class without an approved excuse.
- **School Attendance Improvement Conference (SAIC):** A conference with the school social worker to identify barriers to attendance and develop strategies for improvement.
- **School Attendance Improvement Plan (SAIP):** A written attendance improvement plan developed during the SAIC.

Truancy

Under Pennsylvania law, a student is considered truant after accumulating three (3) or more unexcused absences during a school year. Once a student reaches this threshold, the school may initiate a School Attendance Improvement Conference (SAIC) and/or a referral to the District Magistrate for a Truancy Hearing.

A student is considered **habitually truant** after accumulating six (6) or more unexcused absences and may be subject to additional school-based and legal interventions, including the development of a School Attendance Improvement Plan (SAIP).

Make-Up Work Following Absences

Students are responsible for completing all assignments and assessments missed because of an absence.

Students with Excused Absences

Students whose **excused absence occurs on the due date** of an assignment or assessment will be provided the same number of school days to submit the missed work as the number of school days absent. Teachers will communicate the revised due date upon the student's return.

Students with Unexcused Absences

Students whose **unexcused absence occurs on the due date** of an assignment or assessment are expected to submit the assignment on the day they return to school. The extended due date provided for excused absences does not apply.

If the assignment is not submitted upon the student's return, it will be considered a **late submission** and will follow the school's **Late Work Policy**.

Students with unexcused absences remain responsible for completing all missed assignments and assessments.

Missed Instruction

Students who miss instruction because of an absence are responsible for communicating with their teacher regarding missed learning, assignments, and assessments. Teachers will determine any additional instructional supports or make-up learning opportunities needed based on the nature of the missed instruction.

Assignments submitted more than three (3) school days after the original due date will not be accepted for credit unless otherwise required by a student's educational plan or district policy.

Tardy to School

Arriving on time is an important component of academic success. Repeated unexcused tardies may contribute to truancy as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct.

Students arriving after the start of first period must scan their student ID at the tardy station to obtain a tardy pass before reporting to class. Students will not be admitted to first period without a tardy pass.

Parents/guardians may excuse up to ten (10) absences per school year. All tardies, whether excused or unexcused, accumulate throughout the school year.

Tardy to Class

Students are expected to attend all their classes (including lunch and activity) and be on time according to the bell schedule. Anytime a student is late after the official class period begins, the tardy policy stated below will go into effect.

Important: 5-Minute Hall Pass Rule

To protect instructional time, all hall passes are time-limited.

- Bathroom passes: Return to class within 5 minutes.
- All other destinations: Arrive at your destination within 5 minutes.
- If the staff member is unavailable, return to class immediately and arrange another time to visit.
- Students who are out of class beyond these time limits without staff authorization

Progressive Discipline for Tardies

Unexcused Tardies	Progression of Intervention
3 tardies to class	Teacher has restorative conversation/review expectations with student and discusses tardiness and implications with parent/guardian. Documentation of this is kept by teacher of record.
4 tardies to class	Teacher informs Student Services of number of tardies. Student Services has restorative conversation/review expectations with student and discuss tardiness and implications with parent/guardian.
5 tardies to class	Documentation is submitted via a referral in eSchoolPlus and detention issued.
Each additional 5 tardies thereafter	Teacher has restorative conversation with student/review expectation/calls parent and notifies grade level administrator and/or Project Specialist and Student services. Conferences occur with attendance team, project specialist and/or administrator and parent/guardian. Administrative Action. Documentation is submitted via a referral in eSchoolPlus and detention issued.

Students Leaving the Building/Campus During School

Students are not permitted to leave the school campus during the school day unless they are escorted by a staff member. Any student who leaves campus without authorization will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

ACADEMICS

At Pittsburgh Science & Technology Academy, students are challenged through rigorous coursework, hands-on STEM learning, and meaningful opportunities to apply their knowledge. Every student is expected to engage actively in learning while taking advantage of the academic supports available throughout the school day. The following sections outline our academic programs, opportunities, grading practices, and expectations for student success.

Keys to Academic Success at SciTech

Successful SciTech students:

- Attend school consistently.
- Arrive prepared and on time.
- Participate actively in learning.
- Ask questions and seek help early.
- Use Support Period intentionally.
- Complete assignments on time.
- Revise work using feedback.
- Demonstrate academic honesty.
- Take pride in producing high-quality work.

Academic Program

Student Schedules

Student schedules will be made available to families through the Home Access Center (HAC) prior to the first week of school. Physical copies are provided during back to school night and are provided to students on the first day of school. Mrs. Saavedra can provide your HAC credentials if you need them.

Academic Expectations

Students will be issued textbooks, novels, calculators, lab equipment, and other materials throughout their time at SciTech. All students will receive a district laptop. All student-issued materials and devices must be returned to school at the end of the current school year. Students will be held financially responsible for unreturned items. Student materials and devices must be returned at the end of their course, and/or paid. Students with pending obligations are not considered in good standing and cannot participate in any extracurricular activities (sports, school dances, field trips, prom, commencement ceremony, etc.)

Advisory Program

At SciTech, every student has the support of a dedicated advisor who serves as their advocate, mentor, and connection point between home and school. Students are assigned to an advisor three times during their SciTech journey—once in 6th grade, again in 9th grade, and finally in 10th grade, when they remain with that advisor for the rest of their high school years.

Advisory meets every Wednesday to build strong relationships, foster academic and personal growth, and help students navigate their middle and high school experience. Advisors meet one-on-one and in small groups with students to:

- Review grades, attendance, and overall progress
- Provide guidance on schoolwork and strategies for success at home and in the classroom
- Support personal and academic goal setting
- Help students develop study skills, organization, and self-advocacy

As part of our commitment to communication and accountability, students work with their advisor to craft a weekly email to their families. These updates include their grades, attendance, and—when necessary—a plan for improvement.

This year, the SciTech staff will be working to transform our Advisory program into a skill-building experience that equips students with the tools they need for academic success, personal growth, and life beyond SciTech. Advisors will guide students through targeted lessons and activities focused on organization, study strategies, communication skills, and goal setting. This intentional approach will ensure that advisory time not only supports relationship-building but also strengthens the skills students need to thrive in school, in their communities, and in their future careers.

Support Period

We firmly believe that every student can be successful with the proper amount of time and support. During our activity periods, we offer support for every academic class. If your child needs additional support, please encourage them to sign up for one of the support classes. Schedules are posted around the building at the beginning of every quarter and sent via the weekly SciTech email blast.

Academic Opportunities

Course Offerings

Each year, a Course Offerings Guide is updated and shared with students and families prior to scheduling for the next school year. The course offerings are determined by student

interest, need and staff availability and includes detailed information about graduation requirements for your child's graduation year.

STEM Concentrations

Additional information about the four STEM Concentrations can be found in the "About SciTech" section of this handbook and in the annual Course Guide.

College & Career Preparation

Post-Secondary Preparation

Additional information about the Post-Secondary Preparation can be found in the "About SciTech" section of this handbook and in the annual Course Guide.

Dual Enrollment(CHS)/Advanced Placement (AP) Course Offerings

SciTech offers a rigorous blend of high school and college level courses throughout the high school years. 11th and 12th grade ELA and Social Studies courses are all AP or CHS. We do not offer general or honors-level courses in this content area.

College in High School (CHS) courses are dual-enrollment classes that allow high school students to earn both high school and college credit simultaneously. Offered through partnerships between high schools and colleges or universities— University of Pittsburgh, Seton Hill and LaRoche College—CHS courses are taught at the high school by certified teachers using a college-level syllabus and assessments approved by the sponsoring institution.

College Board Advanced Placement (AP) courses are college-level classes offered in high schools that give students the opportunity to challenge themselves academically and potentially earn college credit. Each course ends with a standardized AP Exam in May, and high scores may qualify students for advanced placement or credit at many colleges and universities. These courses help students develop critical thinking, time management, and subject-specific skills that prepare them for success in college and beyond.

Please refer to Appendix A: Dual Enrollment/Advanced Placement (AP) courses section for information about available courses. For detailed information on AP and CHS offerings, as well as Frequently Asked Questions, see Appendix A on page 44.

Executive Experience

Additional information about Executive Experience can be found in the "About SciTech" section of this handbook.

Academic Support Programs

Special Education **Service Delivery**

Middle and high school special education delivery is completely aligned with that of the district, focusing on inclusion and support. Our PSE teachers are responsible for the development of student Individual Education Plans (IEP's) and ensure that teachers are implementing the specially designed instruction. Special programs for academic support are available to students in certain grade levels, and not exclusive to students with identified special needs. Additionally, students may use their activity period for additional academic support if needed.

Gifted Education **Service Delivery**

The Pittsburgh Science & Technology Academy will provide gifted education services designed to meet the individual needs of each identified student. Middle school students will not attend the Pittsburgh Gifted Center but will receive gifted services within the school. Specially designed instruction based on each student's interests and strengths will be offered on an ongoing basis. Gifted Individualized Educational Plans (GIEPs) will be written prior to school starting and in the fall by CAS facilitators at the school.

English as a Second Language (ESL) **Service Delivery**

SciTech students who qualify for ESL services receive support from our district-assigned ESL teacher. She is on-site every morning and works with students across all proficiency levels—from Newcomers to Experienced Multilingual Learners. Support may include individual or small-group instruction, as well as collaboration with classroom teachers to implement scaffolds and accommodations that meet students' language development needs.

Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)

Pittsburgh Public Schools defines MTSS as a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) as a comprehensive, multi-tiered, standards aligned strategy to enable early identification and intervention for students at academic or behavioral risk. MTSS allows educators to identify and address academic and behavioral difficulties prior to student failure. The MTSS team is comprised of teachers, members of the administrative team and members of the student services department. The goal is to improve student achievement using research-based

interventions matched to the instructional needs and level of the student. (Excerpt from PPS MTSS/RTII Manual). The MTSS process is initiated through a teacher referral which is followed by an MTSS team meeting. A parent will be notified of the referral, identifying the needs of the student, before the meeting takes place. At that notification, a parent can be asked to give input regarding the concern as well as their thoughts on needs and solutions. The MTSS referral is reviewed every 6-8 weeks when the team will convene to measure the success of the interventions put in place. Parents are notified at each of these junctures.

Grading & Assessment

Our Collective Commitments under the Equitable Grading Policy

We believe Educational Equity is defined by ensuring that all students, regardless of their race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, language, religion, family background, or family income are provided the resources they need in order to be successful.

Educational equity is grounded in social justice, the belief that every student deserves the opportunity to succeed, and high quality teaching and curricula that allow them to feel safe, seen, heard and valued while providing them with the skills they need to overcome inequity. Educational equity requires both instructional and policy developing tasks that embrace the values of equity.

Our Commitment to Educational Equity

- We are committed to consistent engagement in equity-centered professional learning that enhances the teaching and learning conditions in our school and our ability to continuously improve instruction.
- We are committed to providing a socially just learning environment where all staff are committed to fostering equity, providing instruction that is culturally responsive and elevating and celebrating student voices.
- We are committed to policy advocacy for students and families impacted by racism.
- We will take a research-based approach for teaching and learning that aligns to both the needs of our most underserved students and to the skills all students will need in their future careers.
- We will value and prioritize inclusive communication and engagement by actively working to include individuals whose perspectives have not traditionally been heard in education decision-making.
- We are committed to providing social and emotional supports to all students and staff by addressing the holistic needs of every child, including those related to behaviors, emotions, and social interactions.
- We will ensure that every student has access to rigorous learning experiences that meet them where they are and challenge them to grow and excel. All students will be held to high expectations.

Equitable Grading Policy

At Pittsburgh Science & Technology Academy, grades should accurately communicate a student's progress toward course standards and learning objectives. Grades are intended to reflect learning, provide meaningful feedback, and encourage continuous growth through opportunities for revision, reflection, and improvement.

The goal of equitable grading is not to lower expectations, but to ensure grades accurately communicate what students know and are able to do while providing meaningful opportunities for learning and growth.

Grading Principles

Grades Reflect Learning and the Academic Behaviors that Make Learning Possible	Grades should primarily reflect a student's demonstration of academic knowledge and skills while also recognizing the importance of academic behaviors that support learning, such as preparation, completion of assigned work, and engagement with the learning process, when appropriate to the assignment.
Feedback Supports Growth	Students will receive timely and meaningful feedback on assignments and assessments. Feedback should help students identify strengths, areas for improvement, and next steps in the learning process.
Multiple Opportunities to Learn	Learning is an ongoing process. Students will have opportunities to improve their performance through revisions and retakes for work submitted by the due date. The purpose of these opportunities is to promote learning, encourage reflection, and provide additional opportunities for students to demonstrate understanding.

Assignment Categories

Students will receive assignments in one of two categories. Both categories contribute to a student's overall course grade and provide valuable information about their progress toward course standards.

Assignment Type

Purpose

Mastery Tasks (Assessments) Measure what students know and are able to do.

Assignment Type	Purpose
Learning Tasks (Classwork, Homework, Practice, Projects, etc.)	Help students build knowledge and skills while receiving feedback and opportunities for growth.

Both Mastery Tasks and Learning Tasks may be graded and contribute to a student's overall course grade.

Individual teachers will communicate assignment expectations, grading weights, and course-specific expectations in their course syllabus.

Course Grading Categories & Weights

Grading categories and assignment weights vary by department and course to reflect the unique instructional goals of each subject area. Teachers will communicate grading categories, assignment weights, homework expectations, and any course-specific grading practices through their course syllabus at the beginning of the course.

Homework

Homework is designed to reinforce and extend classroom learning by providing students with opportunities to practice skills, apply concepts, prepare for future learning, and demonstrate understanding. Meaningful homework assignments support the instructional goals of each course while encouraging students to develop independent learning habits.

At SciTech, homework is intended to help students:

- Reinforce learning through practice, application, and reflection.
- Prepare for upcoming lessons, discussions, and assessments.
- Develop organization, time management, and independent study habits.
- Extend learning beyond the classroom through meaningful academic experiences.
- Strengthen communication between school and home by providing families with insight into student learning.

Homework may be graded when it aligns with course learning objectives and the teacher's grading practices. Homework expectations, grading policies, and assignment weights will be communicated through each teacher's course syllabus.

District 50% Minimum Rule

In accordance with Pittsburgh Public Schools policy, any student who makes a legitimate effort to complete an assignment or assessment but earns below 50% will receive a minimum score of 50%.

A legitimate effort includes responding to prompts, answering questions, showing work, or otherwise meaningfully engaging with the assigned task.

Students who refuse to complete an assignment or make no legitimate effort may receive a zero. Examples of no-effort submissions include, but are not limited to:

- Blank submissions
- Refusal to complete the assignment
- Responses such as "IDK," "I don't know," or similar non-academic responses
- Work that does not meaningfully engage with the assigned task

Late Work

Students are expected to submit assignments by the established due date.

Assignments submitted after the original due date will be accepted for up to three (3) days unless otherwise communicated by the teacher or prohibited by the requirements of an Advanced Placement (AP) or College in High School (CHS) course.

Assignments submitted after the original due date are considered late submissions and are not eligible for revision or retake opportunities.

Teachers may not reduce or deduct points solely because an assignment was submitted late. Grades should reflect the quality of a student's demonstrated learning rather than the timing of submission.

Assignments submitted more than three (3) school days after the original due date will not be accepted for credit unless otherwise required by a student's educational plan or district policy.

Revisions and Retakes

Revision: Improving the original assignment using teacher feedback.	Retake: Completing a new version of an assessment or redoing an assessment to demonstrate improved understanding.
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Students must receive feedback before completing a revision or retake.

All assignments and assessments submitted by the original due date are eligible for revision and/or retake opportunities. The method of revision or retake may vary depending on the nature of the assignment.

Teachers may require students to complete additional practice, corrections, conferencing, or other learning activities before completing a revision or retake.

When returning an assignment or assessment, teachers will communicate the revision or retake deadline in writing. The deadline must be between two (2) and five (5) school days from the date feedback is provided.

Revision and retake expectations will be communicated in each course syllabus.

Final Grading Deadlines

The due dates, late-work windows, and revision/retake deadlines outlined in this policy remain in effect throughout the grading period.

Regardless of those timelines, no late submissions, revisions, or retakes will be accepted after the final day of the interim or grading period. Students are expected to complete all grading opportunities before these deadlines.

Teachers are expected to provide feedback and communicate revision or retake opportunities with sufficient time for students to complete them before grades close.

Midterm and final examinations are not eligible for revisions or retakes.

Advanced Placement (AP) and College in High School (CHS)

College in High School (CHS) courses must adhere to the grading policies and requirements established by the partnering college or university.

Advanced Placement (AP) courses may establish additional expectations regarding revisions, retakes, and assignment deadlines that reflect the rigor and pacing of college-level coursework. These expectations will be communicated in the course syllabus.

Teacher Professional Judgment

While teachers maintain professional judgment regarding instructional practices, assignment design, and methods used to assess student learning, the expectations outlined in this policy establish consistent grading practices across Pittsburgh Science & Technology Academy while allowing teachers the flexibility to make instructional decisions that best support student learning.

Monitoring Student Progress

Pittsburgh Science & Technology Academy uses two online platforms to help students and families stay informed about academic progress and classroom learning. Families are encouraged to review both systems regularly throughout the school year.

The **Home Access Center (HAC)** is the official Pittsburgh Public Schools student information system and should be used to monitor a student's academic progress.

Through HAC, students and families can:

- View current grades in each course.
- Monitor assignment scores and overall course averages.
- Access progress reports and report cards.
- Review attendance and tardy information.
- View student schedules and other important academic information.

Families are encouraged to check HAC regularly and contact teachers promptly with questions regarding grades or missing assignments.

Schoology is SciTech's learning management system and serves as the primary platform for classroom instruction and communication.

Students use Schoology to:

- Access daily lessons and instructional materials.
- Submit assignments and projects.
- View teacher feedback.
- Participate in online discussions and classroom activities.
- Access classroom resources, study guides, and announcements.

Staying Informed

HAC and Schoology work together to provide a complete picture of student learning.

- Use HAC to monitor grades, attendance, progress reports, and report cards.
- Use Schoology to view classroom learning, assignments, instructional materials, and teacher feedback.

Checking both platforms regularly is one of the best ways families can support their student's academic success.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

As an academic community committed to the preparation of intellectually-sound students, the Pittsburgh Science and Technology Academy requires that every student use intellectual honesty in the preparation of all assigned academic work.

Cheating

Cheating is defined as giving or attempting to give or receive during an assignment or examination any aid unauthorized by the instructor. An assignment is any work assigned by the teacher; an examination is any quiz, pre- or un-announced test, hourly examination, mid-term or final examination or homework.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is passing off another person's work as one's own. It is taking and presenting another's ideas, research, writing, creations, or inventions as their own. It makes no difference whether the source is another student or a professional in some field. For example, in written work, whenever as much as a sentence or key phrase is taken from the work of another without specific citation of the source, the issue of plagiarism arises. Paraphrasing is the close restatement of another's idea using approximately the language of the original. Paraphrasing without acknowledgment of authorship is also plagiarism and is as serious a violation as an unacknowledged quotation. When in doubt, it is best to consult with your teacher and heavily cite your work.

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

The use of generative AI tools (such as ChatGPT or others) is encouraged as a valuable resource for learning and creativity with teacher support and guidance. We support students in exploring these tools to enhance their work, provided they use them responsibly and with academic integrity. Students should always ensure that their use of AI tools complements their own thinking and understanding, and they must properly attribute any content generated by AI as required by the assignment guidelines. Learning and mastery tasks for your courses have been designed to help you develop as a writer without the use of AI. You will generate ideas, read, revise, and write on your own and/or in consultation with peers, or your instructor. Students will not use AI at any stage of the writing process. Student writing does not have to be a 100% match to an AI sample to be labeled as AI generated. Students are the author of their work for the course and authorship means the student takes responsibility for their words and claims. Any use of AI technologies in the work will be considered a plagiarism violation and addressed as below.

Consequence for Cheating and Plagiarism

Students will receive 50% on any assignment or test on the first incident of cheating or plagiarism during a course as a final grade for that assignment or test. They will not be permitted to retake or revise the assignment or test. A second referral for cheating or plagiarism will result in the student receiving a 50% failure as the quarter grade for the course.

Unauthorized Collaboration

Unless specifically permitted by the teacher, students are expected to complete and submit their own work independently. Working with another student, sharing answers, dividing portions of an assignment, or allowing another student to copy work intended to be completed individually is considered unauthorized collaboration.

Teachers will clearly communicate when collaboration is encouraged or permitted and when assignments are expected to be completed independently.

Unauthorized collaboration may be treated as a violation of the school's Academic Integrity expectations.

Reusing Old Work

Students may not submit work previously completed for another class or assignment without the teacher's prior approval.

Maintaining Your Magnet Status

[PPS Policy 120-AR-1](#)

As a Pittsburgh Public Schools magnet school, SciTech students are expected to meet academic, attendance, and behavioral expectations to remain enrolled in the program. The following criteria apply to all students.

District Magnet Requirements

These are requirements established by Pittsburgh Public Schools.

Grades 6–8

- 90% attendance
- No more than one 4–10 day suspension
- No more than six cumulative suspension days

Grades 9–12

- 90% attendance
- 2.0 GPA
- No more than one 4–10 day suspension
- No more than six cumulative suspension days

Maintaining Progress in Your STEM Concentration

Beginning in Grade 10, all students participate in one of SciTech's four STEM concentrations. Because these courses are the foundation of the school's specialized magnet program, students are expected to make satisfactory academic progress within their selected concentration.

SciTech's STEM concentrations provide students with a unique sequence of advanced courses that build knowledge and skills over three years. Continued success in these courses is essential to fully participating in the SciTech experience.

If a student is unsuccessful in a concentration course:

- Student is placed on a Concentration Improvement Plan.
- Teacher develops a project.
- Complete by the end of the following quarter.
- Available twice.
- Third unsuccessful attempt may result in rescission.

Students are also expected to maintain a 2.0 GPA within their concentration coursework in order to remain eligible for continued enrollment in SciTech's specialized STEM program.

SciTech is committed to helping every student remain successful in the magnet program. When concerns arise regarding attendance, academics, or behavior, the school will work collaboratively with students and families to develop support plans and interventions whenever possible before considering rescission from the magnet program.

ATHLETICS/EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Athletics

SciTech students who are interested in participating in athletics can do so with our partner schools through a cooperative sponsorship. Mr. Shevitz serves as our Athletics Liaison with these schools and can be contacted at kshevitz1@pghschools.org.

Fall sports	Winter sports	Spring sports
Cross Country	Boys Basketball	Baseball
Golf	Girls Basketball	Softball
Football	Wrestling	Track
Boys Soccer	Swimming	Volleyball
Girls Soccer	MS Swimming*	Girls Flag Football
Girls Volleyball	MS Basketball♦	MS Soccer*
Girls Tennis		
MS Cross Country*		
MS Volleyball♦		
MS Flag Football♦		

Key: * - Practices at SciTech ♦ - Practices at UPrep

Grades 9-12

Our high school students partner with Pittsburgh Obama and University Prep for varsity athletics. Our students may participate in any sport that is offered. Students can only tryout or participate in practice after submitting a completed physical.

Grades 6-8

Our middle school student's partner with University Prep and information regarding the middle school athletic program will be available closer to the start of school. The location of all practices and games will be primarily at University Prep but will be determined on a sport-by-sport basis. Information will be available for students once the school year

begins. Please direct any questions regarding the middle school sports program to the SciTech Athletics Liaison, Kevin Shevitz, at kshevitz1@pghschools.org.

Student Clubs and Organizations

Pittsburgh Science & Technology Academy offers a wide variety of student clubs and organizations that allow students to explore interests, develop leadership skills, build friendships, and make meaningful contributions to the school and community. These opportunities complement the academic program by encouraging service, creativity, competition, advocacy, and personal growth.

Student clubs and organizations meet at various times throughout the school year, including **before school, during lunch, after school, evenings, and weekends**, depending on the nature of the organization and its activities.

Please Note: Student clubs and organizations differ from **Activity Period** offerings. While Activity Period provides rotating enrichment opportunities during the school day, the clubs and organizations listed below are established extracurricular programs that meet throughout the school year.

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION
African American History Bowl	Students in Grades 9-12 can compete in the African American challenge bowl by reading a book (TBD) about African American history and answering questions. Two students will go to the local competition that takes place in February and the winner goes on to nationals over the summer. Students in grades 6-8 can compete in the African American Challenge Bowl by studying trivia about African American History. They compete in groups of four at a local competition.
Autistic Student Union	ASU creates a safe and welcoming environment for students with autism, neurodivergent students, and their allies. ASU advocates for autistic acceptance. This includes addressing bullying, general awareness. We also provide allies with strategies to support their autistic friends, e.g., how to support someone when they are shutting down.

Black Student Union (BSU)	Black Student Union is a group where students come together to discuss racial issues and how these impact students. We search for solutions and in-depth dialogue about living in a racially-charged society.
Ecostewards	Students take part in hands-on service projects in Frick Park, helping care for the environment while learning about conservation and sustainability.
Envirothon	Students will study for the 2026 Allegheny County Envirothon Competition. The topics include aquatics, forestry, soil, current events, and wildlife. Students will work in teams to read and study content in preparation for competing in teams at the competition. There is some crossover with Science Olympiad.
Feminist Student Union (FSU)	Feminist Student Union is an organization of young men and women in grades 9-12 who are interested in discussing and working on issues relating to ending sexism in our school and community.
FIRST Robotics Programs (FLL, FTC & FRC)	Students design, build, program, and compete with robots through the internationally recognized FIRST Robotics programs. Depending on grade level and experience, students participate in FIRST LEGO League, FIRST Tech Challenge, or FIRST Robotics Competition while developing engineering, programming, teamwork, and problem-solving skills.
Gender and Sexuality Alliance (GSA)	The Gender and Sexuality Alliance at SciTech is focused on education about the LGBTQIA+ community within SciTech and the Pittsburgh community. Help us partner with other student organizations within the school, plan events, field trips, and host a safe space for discussions. All are welcome!
Interact Club	Interact Club strives to serve others by participating in community service projects. The majority of these activities occur after school and on weekends, and we volunteer with organizations such as the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank, Light of Life Ministries, and the Best of the Batch Foundation.
Math League	Students participate in monthly competitions with Allderdice, Obama, and Winchester Thurston. Each monthly contest consists of a Team Round in which each team works together to solve 5 problems and 2 Individual Rounds in which each student works independently to solve a set of problems.

MENA (Middle Eastern North African Student Union)	Students with ethnic backgrounds from these geographic locations and students who have a desire to learn more about and from these cultures are welcome to join. Students plan events, discuss together, and enjoy cultural media.
Mock Trial	Mock trial is an activity open to twelve students per year in grades 9-12. Students prepare to portray attorneys or witnesses and compete in a trial setting against other schools in Allegheny County. Please speak to Ms. Miller if you are interested in continuing SciTech's record of mock trial success!
NextGen Health Care	This is a group affiliated with the Pittsburgh Chapter of Women in Bio to help mentor and support young women who are interested in pursuing Science or life science fields. There will be 5 meetings throughout the school year meeting after school with female community mentors along with other events in the Pittsburgh area. This is for 9-12th grade students and will be limited to 14 participants.
Pennsylvania Junior Academy of Science (PJAS) AND Pittsburgh Regional Science and Engineering Fair (PRSEF)	The Pittsburgh Regional Science and Engineering Fair (PRSEF) and the Pennsylvania Junior Academy of Science (PJAS) are two science competitions that students can showcase their own scientific research to a panel of judges. Students are eligible for significant cash and scholarship awards. PJAS is held in early February and PRSEF is held end of March.
Science Olympiad	In its fourth year, the SciTech Science Olympiad team aims to qualify for the state competition, having just fallen short at regionals last year. Like the Olympics, the Science Olympiad is a series of events in a wide range of scientific categories from robotics to earth and space to the life sciences to experimental designs and much much more. Some events are tests, some are lab experiments, and still others involve building a structure or device ahead of time. There is some crossover with Envirothon.
SciTech News	A student-centered group that creates a near daily video program that informs and entertains the school population.

SeaPerch	SeaPerch is an innovative underwater robotics after-school program that equips students with the resources they need to build a small submarine (Remotely Operated Vehicle). Working with engineers from Bettis Laboratories, the SeaPerch Program provides students with the opportunity to learn about robotics, engineering, science, and mathematics (STEM) in addition to problem solving and teamwork.
Stand Together for Change	This is a student-led group supported by DrK and the Allegheny County Health department to raise awareness and educate Teens about Mental Health Issues in our school and community. The goal is to break the stigma against mental illness. If interested in mental health issues please join us! This is open to 9-12th grade students.
Yearbook	Work together to design, photograph, and write the stories that capture our school year. Members learn about photography, layout, editing, and teamwork while creating a lasting keepsake for the school community.
Young Women in Bio	This is a group affiliated with the Pittsburgh Chapter of Women in Bio to help mentor and support young women who are interested in pursuing Science or life science fields. There will be 5 meetings throughout the school year meeting after school with female community mentors along with other events in the Pittsburgh area. This is for 9-12th grade students and will be limited to 14 participants.

Activity Period

One of the things that makes SciTech unique is our daily Activity Period, a dedicated time built into the school day for students to explore interests, receive academic support, participate in enrichment opportunities, and become involved in the school community.

Students may choose from a wide variety of activities, including clubs, STEM experiences, wellness opportunities, arts, leadership programs, and academic supports.

Activity Period selections are completed prior to each quarter using an online sign-up form. Students who submit their selections by the deadline are scheduled based on their

preferences whenever possible. Students who do not complete the sign-up process by the deadline will be assigned to activities with available space.

*Refer to Student Expectations/Procedures section for additional Activity/Advisory period expectations.

Student Leadership Organizations

Student Envoy

The Student Envoy Program empowers middle school students to serve as leaders, problem-solvers, and ambassadors for the SciTech middle school community. Student Envoys work collaboratively with school administration and staff to strengthen school culture, provide student feedback, and develop projects that improve the school experience for their peers. Selected through an application process, Student Envoys represent a diverse group of student leaders who meet weekly, attend district leadership events, and help lead initiatives that promote a positive, inclusive, and student-centered school community.

Ron Clark Academy House System Leaders

House Leaders are selected student leaders who represent each of the four Ron Clark Academy Houses. They help lead House meetings, welcome new members, organize House activities, encourage school spirit, and serve as positive role models while helping strengthen relationships and build community throughout the school year. All House System leaders also serve in Student Envoy.

SciTech Student Ambassadors

Represent SciTech at a variety of outreach events, whether with current students and families or prospective students and families. Application is required.

Superintendent's Student Advisory Council (SSAC)

The Superintendent's Student Advisory Council provides high school students with an opportunity to represent SciTech while serving as student advisors to the

Superintendent of Pittsburgh Public Schools. Selected students share student perspectives, provide feedback on district initiatives, discuss topics affecting students across the District, and help ensure that student voice is included in district-level decision-making. Students are nominated based on their leadership, communication skills, and commitment to representing the interests of their school community.

African American Center for Advanced Studies

The African American Center for Advanced Studies (AACAS) provides African American students with opportunities for academic enrichment, leadership development, and collaboration with peers from across Pittsburgh Public Schools enrolled in advanced coursework. Students participate in monthly district meetings, leadership experiences, college and career exploration, and the annual AACAS Symposium, where they engage in workshops, discussions, and presentations led by educators, professionals, and community leaders.

At SciTech, all African American juniors and seniors are eligible to participate in AACAS. Freshmen and sophomores are eligible if they have a Gifted Individualized Education Program (GIEP).

National Honor Society

The National Honor Society empowers and equips your students with the knowledge and skills to be transformative leaders in your school, community, and beyond. Students would have to have applied at the end of the 23-24 school year to be in NHS.

SciTech Peer Mediation and Mentorship

Serves as a neutral third party in conflicts between their peers. Facilitates a process of effective communication, negotiation, understanding and problem-solving between students. Earns the trust of their peers by remaining neutral, upholding strong values and being a good listener. Influence school culture by promoting peace, courage, understanding and safety. Applications and interviews are required. If students feel that they need mediation with another student, they can speak to their teacher or advisor to request one.

Students in grades 6-9 are eligible to have a **SciTech student mentor**. Our high school peer mentoring program connects high school students with students in grades 6-9 to provide guidance, support, and encouragement. These mentors serve as positive role models, helping younger students build confidence, navigate academic and social challenges, and develop strong habits for success. Through weekly check-ins, group activities, and one-on-one conversations, mentors foster meaningful relationships that promote leadership, empathy, and a stronger school community. Students may self-refer or be referred by a teacher to participate in the mentoring program.

Class Councils

Student Class Councils provide high school students with opportunities to develop leadership skills while helping shape the student experience at SciTech. Each class council plans events, fundraisers, and activities that build school spirit and create memorable experiences for their classmates.

- **Freshman and Sophomore Class Council:** Plans activities that welcome students to high school, build class unity, and support freshman/sophomore events throughout the year.
- **Junior Class Council:** Plans fundraisers, spirit activities, and events for the junior class while helping prepare for senior year.
- **Senior Class Council:** Plans prom, senior fundraisers, spirit activities, and other events that celebrate the graduating class and create lasting traditions.

Ron Clark Academy House System

The Pittsburgh Science & Technology Academy Middle School participates in the Ron Clark Academy House System, a nationally recognized program that builds school pride, belonging, leadership, and positive relationships. Every student is assigned to one of four Houses, where they remain throughout middle school and, beginning with the Class of 2030, continue into ninth grade as our program expands.

Students earn House Points by demonstrating academic excellence, positive character, teamwork, school spirit, and other behaviors that strengthen our learning community. Throughout the year, Houses participate in friendly competitions,

service projects, celebrations, and team-building activities while developing traditions unique to their House. The House System encourages students to support one another across grade levels, celebrate individual and collective success, and develop leadership skills that contribute to a positive school culture.

Student Activity Calendar

Each month, students/families will receive paper copies and electronic access to the Student Activity Calendar. All events, activities, fundraisers, field trips will be listed on this calendar, to the extent possible. This will be passed out the last Wednesday of the month preceding the calendar in advisory and the weekly SciTech email blast.

Field Trips

Field trips are an important part of the SciTech educational experience. Our location in the heart of Oakland provides students with regular opportunities to extend their learning beyond the classroom through visits to universities, museums, laboratories, businesses, and community organizations. Participation in school-sponsored field trips is considered part of the instructional program and does not count as an absence from school.

Walking Field Trips

Because of SciTech's location, students frequently participate in walking field trips to nearby educational and community partners within Oakland. At the beginning of each school year, families will complete a general Walking Field Trip Permission Form, which grants permission for students to participate in these local instructional experiences. Separate permission slips are generally not required for walking field trips covered by the annual permission form.



Walking Field Trip

Walking field trips are typically scheduled within a single class period. If participation requires a student to miss additional class periods, the student must obtain signatures from each affected teacher prior to the trip. This process ensures teachers are aware of the student's absence and reminds students that they are responsible for completing all missed assignments, assessments, and classwork.

Traditional Field Trips

Field trips that occur **outside of Oakland** or require transportation by **school bus or Pittsburgh Regional Transit (PRT)** require a separate permission slip for each trip.

Families will receive information in advance regarding the educational purpose of the trip, transportation arrangements, departure and return times, costs (if applicable), and any additional requirements for participation.

Students participating in traditional field trips are responsible for completing any assignments, assessments, or classwork missed during other classes while attending the trip.

DRESS CODE

Pittsburgh Science & Technology Academy does **not** require students to wear school uniforms. Students are encouraged to express their individuality through their clothing while maintaining attire that is appropriate for a safe, respectful, and distraction-free learning environment. The dress code applies during the school day as well as all school-sponsored activities, including those that occur off campus or outside of regular school hours.

Expectations for Daily Dress

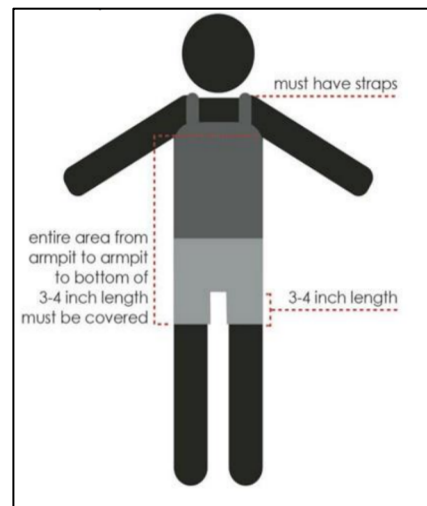
Student attire must:

- Be appropriate for a school setting.
- Cover undergarments and the midsection.
- Allow students to safely participate in all school activities.
- Students may not wear clothing, accessories, or jewelry that, through words, images, symbols, or designs:
- Promote or advertise alcohol, tobacco, vaping products, drugs, violence, or illegal activities.
- Contain sexually explicit or suggestive language or images.
- Demean, harass, or discriminate against another individual or group based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender (including gender identity or expression), sexual orientation, disability, or any other protected characteristic.

Clothing Not Permitted

The following items are not permitted at school:

- Strapless, tube, backless, or bare-shouldered tops.
- Crop tops or other clothing that exposes the midsection.
- See-through clothing that does not provide appropriate coverage.
- Clothing that exposes undergarments.
- Any attire that substantially disrupts the educational environment or creates a safety concern.
- Please refer to the accompanying dress code visual for additional examples and clarification.



ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Cell Phone Collection

To support a focused learning environment, all students are required to turn in their cell phones upon entering the building each morning.

- Student cell phones are collected at the entrance and placed in their assigned 6th period teacher's designated cell phone bin. Tardy students will turn in cell phones to the main office upon their arrival.
- Cell phone bins are securely stored throughout the school day.
- Students may not possess or use a cell phone during the instructional day unless authorized by school staff. Students who bring multiple devices (cell phones, smart phones, or similar communication devices) are expected to turn in all devices upon arrival.
- Cell phone bins are returned to classrooms prior to dismissal, and students receive their devices approximately five (5) minutes before the dismissal bell. After the dismissal bell, tardy students come to the main office and retrieve their cell phones from the tardy bins.
- Students who fail to turn in a cell phone or are found in possession of a cell phone during the school day will be subject to the following procedures:

Progress of Intervention

1st Violation of the cell phone policy

- Individual warning
- Referral
- Turn in phone immediately to the designated administrator.
- Phone call will be made and followed up with a Talking Point message.

2nd Violation of the cell phone policy

- Referral
- Phone will be confiscated by administration and a parent/guardian/ emergency contact listed in eSchools will be required to pick up the device.
- Student will be required to turn their phone(s) directly into Mr. Chambers upon arrival into the school building.

This schoolwide procedure ensures consistency, minimizes distractions, and supports student engagement throughout the school day.

If parents/guardians must reach their student in case of an emergency, they may call the main office. The message will be delivered to their child. Parents can also email their student at the student's school email address.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

To graduate, students must successfully complete the following: **their graduation year's academic credits** and **achieve Proficiency on the Keystone exams**.

1. The total number of graduation credits must be earned in the following areas according to your child's graduation year.

Content Area	# of credits for Class of 2027	# of credits for Class of 2028 and beyond
Science	6-7	6-7
Mathematics	4	4
English	4	4
Social Studies	4	4
Personal Finance	0.5	0.5
Post-Secondary Prep	1	1
World Language	2	2
Art/Music	1	1
Health	0.5	0.5
Physical Education	1	2
Total Credits	24-25	25-26

2. Pennsylvania Statewide Graduation Requirement (Act 158 of 2018)

Beginning with the Pittsburgh Public Schools graduating class of 2023, students can demonstrate postsecondary readiness through one of five pathways that reflect college, career, and community preparedness.

While the Keystone Exams will continue to serve as Pennsylvania's statewide assessment for federal accountability under Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), students are no longer required to achieve proficiency on the exams to meet state graduation requirements. However, all students must still take the Keystone Exams for accountability purposes.

Students may fulfill state graduation requirements through one of the following five pathways:

1. Keystone Proficiency
2. Keystone Composite
3. Career and Technical Education (CTE) Concentrator
4. Alternative Assessment
5. Evidence-Based

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Who to See for Support at SciTech

At SciTech, both the School Social Worker and the School Counselor are here to support you. They have different roles, so here's how to know who to go to:

School Social Worker – *Helps with life outside of class*

- If you're struggling with attendance
- If you need mental health support or SAP referral
- If you or your family need help connecting to community resources (housing, food, healthcare, etc.)
- If you're going through a crisis and need immediate support

School Counselor – *Helps with school and your future*

- If you need help with course scheduling or transcripts
- If you're planning for college or careers (Naviance)
- If you need a work permit
- If you have academic concerns or need MTSS support
- If you're starting the IEP or 504 referral process

Both are here to listen, support you, and connect you with the right resources. Do not hesitate to reach out!

Student Assistance Program (SAP)

Pittsburgh Public School's SAP or Student Assistant Program helps to support students by addressing barriers to learning.

SAP Team identifies resources both within the school and outside of the school to help our students. The team in each school is made up of certain professional members that assist in the referral of SAP team services and meet on a monthly basis. The SAP Team also provides prevention education, such as Bullying/Harassment, Drug & Alcohol Prevention, etc. during the Advisory period.

Referrals

Students should be referred to SAP Team after they have gone through the MTSS process.

Student Equity Advocate (SEA)

The Student Equity Advocate is here to support your child, help them see their strengths, and make sure they have access to the opportunities they need to succeed in school and beyond. The SEA works with students in both one-on-one and small-group mentoring sessions to talk about goals, grades, identity, and future plans. Students may be selected to work with the SEA based on grades, attendance, and other factors, but students can also connect with the SEA for extra support.

Mentoring sessions focus on topics like building confidence, understanding identity, planning for college or careers, and taking action in the school and community. Students with the SEA might also join group activities, district events, or college visits organized by the SEA. The SEA is not a counselor or disciplinarian—they are here to listen, guide, and work with your child so they can achieve their goals and feel a strong sense of belonging at SciTech.

Health Services

The health and well-being of our students is very important. Please inform our school nurse of any medical concerns that you have about your student's health throughout the school year, this includes illness or injuries. All families received/will receive a grade-level specific letter from the nurse regarding required immunizations and physicals.

If your student requires the administration of prescription or over-the-counter medication during the school day, a completed medication administration form is required on the first day of school, this form can be found on the PPS website, www.pghschools.org. All medication must be in the original prescription labeled container to be administered by the school health office.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY/ACCEPTABLE USE

Pittsburgh Public Schools' Office of Information Technology Acceptable Use Form must be reviewed and filled out by a parent/guardian before students will be allowed access to any PPS computer or technology-based resource. This form is required annually of all students in the Pittsburgh Public Schools and reflects the entire agreement and understanding of all parties.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)

Pittsburgh Public Schools defines MTSS as a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) as a comprehensive, multi-tiered, standards aligned strategy to enable early identification and intervention for students at academic or behavioral risk. MTSS allows educators to identify and address academic and behavioral difficulties prior to student failure. The MTSS team is comprised of teachers, members of the administrative team and members of the student services department. The goal is to improve student achievement using research-based interventions matched to the instructional needs and level of the student. (Excerpt from PPS MTSS/RTII Manual). The MTSS process is initiated through a teacher referral which is followed by an MTSS team meeting. A parent will be notified of the referral, identifying the needs of the student, before the meeting takes place. At that notification, a parent can be asked to give input regarding the concern as well as their thoughts on needs and solutions. The MTSS referral is reviewed every 6-8 weeks when the team will convene to measure the success of the interventions put in place. Parents are notified at each of these junctures.

Student Assistance Program (SAP)

Pittsburgh Public School's SAP or Student Assistant Program helps to support students by addressing barriers to learning.

SAP Team identifies resources both within the school and outside of the school to help our students. The team in each school is made up of certain professional members that assist in the referral of SAP team services and meet on a monthly basis. The SAP Team also provides prevention education, such as Bullying/Harassment, Drug & Alcohol Prevention, etc. during the Advisory period.

Referrals

Students should be referred to SAP Team after they have gone through the MTSS process.

How do parents know if/when their child is referred? School social workers will reach out with parent permission slips and information.

Can parents make the referral? Parents can contact the school counselor or social worker to make a referral.

How is progress communicated to students, parents, staff? Progress is communicated with affected students, staff and parents by the school social worker and/or school based therapist.

Peer Mediators and Peer Mentorship

At Sci-Tech we have a peer mediation program that helps students navigate conflicts and/or disagreements with student mediators that have been officially trained in peer mediation and conflict resolution. Some students may never utilize this program but if conflicts occur, we want to provide all the support that we can. Mediation is a process that gives the students a chance to tell their side of the story and listen to the other side in the presence of a trained mediator who will help them work towards a solution to resolve the conflict. This is not a substitution for infractions that are a violation of school policy and require suspension. However, in many cases, mediation is a restorative in-nature process that can avoid conflicts that might otherwise escalate to those that require disciplinary action. Through this voluntary process, students will learn skills and tools that will help them not only resolve the current conflict but also navigate future ones.

If students feel that they need mediation with another student, they can speak to their teacher or advisor to request one.

Students in grades 6-9 are eligible to have a Sci-Tech student mentor. Our high school peer mentoring program connects high school students with students in grades 6-9 to provide guidance, support, and encouragement. These mentors serve as positive role models, helping younger students build confidence, navigate academic and social challenges, and develop strong habits for success. Through weekly check-ins, group activities, and one-on-one conversations, mentors foster meaningful relationships that promote leadership, empathy, and a stronger school community.

Students, families and staff can request mentors for students. Information is sent to families in the back-to-school mailing, and students can reach out to a teacher to request one.

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS/PROCEDURES

Home-School Compact of Understanding

At SciTech, we believe student success is built on a strong partnership among students, families, and school staff. The Home-School Compact reflects our shared commitment to creating a safe, supportive, and academically rigorous learning environment where every student can thrive.



Compact of Understanding

As a SciTech STAFF MEMBER I....

- Believe in all students' abilities to reach their highest potential and support them in doing so.
- Treat others with kindness, accept who they are, and celebrate our differences, and encourage students to do so.
- Give grace to others in our learning community. Assume best intentions, inquire mindfully.
- Practice accountable and restorative talk.*
- Listen and affirm students' perspectives when they communicate about barriers/ need support.
- Provide constructive feedback in a positive manner acknowledging there is room to grow and progress.
- Utilize data to differentiate learning to create rigorous, relevant lessons.
- Provide equitable learning support and flexibility to students.
- Implement socio-emotional learning and support self-care practices/skills.
- Promote and elevate student voice.
- Develop positive partnerships with students and families focused on student success.
- Develop expectations collaboratively with the learning community.
- Communicate how to access student resources and supports.

As a SciTech STUDENT I...	• Believe in myself and encourage others to do so too. • Treat others with kindness, accept who they are, and celebrate our differences. • Consider the impact of my actions on myself and others. • Give grace to others in my learning community. Assume best intentions, inquire mindfully. • Initiate and engage in courageous conversations.* • Practice accountable and restorative talk.* • Communicate with my teachers or other SciTech staff if I encounter barriers/ need support. • Use feedback from staff to grow in my understanding and revise my work to continually improve. • Plan/set goals for turning in assignments so that I can continue on my learning path. • Engage in class and the learning community to demonstrate my learning progression. • Acknowledge that self-care: sleep, rest, and rejuvenation are important. • Maintain a 90% or greater attendance rate. • Bring my materials, mind, and body to the class, ready to learn. • Know where class resources are located.
As a SciTech FAMILY MEMBER I...	• Believe in and celebrate my student's potential! • Encourage your student to treat others with kindness, accept who they are, and celebrate our differences. • Give grace to others in our learning community. Assume best intentions, inquire mindfully. • Practice accountable and restorative talk* with school community. • Listen and affirm students' perspectives they communicate about barriers/ need support. • Support my student's abilities to take care of social-emotional and mental health (such as healthy eating, sleep, and activities that lead to their rejuvenation). • Develop positive partnerships with the staff to support the success of my student. • Collaborate with my student and their teachers as partners in the learning process. • Know where to view student grades, classwork, and student resources.

Student Expectations/Procedures

Policy 212 PPS Code of Conduct

To ensure the health and safety of all students at Pittsburgh SciTech, students are expected to review, sign, and adhere to the Student Behavioral Contract below.

Student Commitment to Success

I understand that I have the right to:

- Learn in a safe, respectful, and supportive environment free from discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying.
- Know the school rules and the behaviors that may result in disciplinary action.
- Receive guidance and support from teachers, counselors, social workers, administrators, and other school staff regarding my behavior and well-being.
- Due process when disciplinary action may result in a suspension of more than three (3) consecutive school days, more than ten (10) cumulative school days, or expulsion, in accordance with Pittsburgh Public Schools policy.

I agree to:

- Arrive to school and each class on time and prepared to learn.
- Follow the Pittsburgh Public Schools Code of Student Conduct and all SciTech expectations.
- Show respect for all members of the school community.
- Respond respectfully and comply with staff directions when given. If I disagree with a decision, I understand I will have an opportunity to respectfully share my concerns at an appropriate time.
- Use school resources appropriately and seek support from a teacher, counselor, social worker, administrator, or other trusted adult when I need assistance rather than isolating myself in a restroom or other unsupervised area.
- Use the restroom only for its intended purpose.
- Use school property appropriately and refrain from climbing on, hanging from, or jumping to touch fixtures, equipment, or other building features.

Hallway Expectations

- I understand that appropriate hallway behavior includes:
- Walk calmly and remain on the right side of the hallway.
- Report directly to my destination and arrive within the five-minute hall pass expectation.

- Return to class immediately if the staff member at my destination is unavailable rather than waiting in the hallway.
- Use an appropriate voice level that does not disrupt classrooms or other learning spaces.
- Keep my hands, feet, and belongings to myself.
- Respect school property and maintain a safe learning environment.
- Follow directions given by any staff member promptly and respectfully.

Cafeteria Expectations

- I understand that appropriate cafeteria behavior includes:
- Walk at all times; running is not permitted.
- Use an indoor voice and refrain from yelling, screaming, screeching, or making excessive noise.
- Keep my hands, feet, food, and personal belongings to myself.
- Do not throw food or other objects or intentionally pop bags or containers.
- Refrain from horseplay, roughhousing, wrestling, or other unsafe behavior.
- Remain seated unless given permission to move.
- Clean up after myself and dispose of trash properly.
- Treat cafeteria staff, classmates, and school property with respect.
- I understand that Level 2, Level 3, and Level 4 behaviors occurring in the cafeteria will be addressed in accordance with the Pittsburgh Public Schools Code of Student Conduct.

Activity Period/Advisory Expectations

Activity Period is an instructional part of the school day. Students are expected to:

- Report directly to their assigned activity each day.
- Attend only the activity to which they have been assigned.
- Report to the updated location if an activity has been relocated.
- Remain in their assigned activity for the duration of the period unless given permission by a staff member.
- Follow all school expectations while participating in activities.

Attendance is taken during Activity Period and Advisory. Students who fail to report to their assigned activity or who remain in hallways, restrooms, or other common areas without permission will receive a referral for skipping class.

I have been directed to the Pittsburgh Public Schools Code of Student Conduct and understand the expectations outlined in this agreement. I understand that violations of the Code of Student Conduct or this agreement may result in restorative interventions,

guidance supports, and/or disciplinary action in accordance with district policy. Code of Conduct: <https://www.pghschools.org/student-supports/code-of-conduct/conduct-homepage>

Student Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

VISITORS & FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

POLICY 1004

We believe students are most successful when schools and families work together.

Pittsburgh Science & Technology Academy provides many opportunities for families to stay informed, volunteer, and actively participate in our school community.

Visitor Policy

To ensure the safety of our students and staff, all visitors entering beyond the main office must check in using the Raptor Visitor Management System. Visitors must present a valid government-issued photo ID, receive a visitor badge, and wear the badge throughout their visit.

If you require an ADA-accessible entrance, please call the main office before you arrive (412-529-7620) and a staff member will meet you at the Bouquet Street entrance or a ground level entrance in the main parking lot facing 5th Avenue. An elevator is available.

Parent School Community Council (PSCC)

Purpose: Attending Parent School Community Council Meetings (PSCC) is a great way to support your student and school! The purpose of the Pittsburgh Science & Technology Academy PSCC is to provide ongoing communication between the school and parents, guardians and community groups regarding issues that are important to the success of our students.

Meeting Schedule: PSCC Meetings are held monthly. The dates, times, and formats for the 2026-2027 school year are below. Meetings will take place on the last Thursday of each month.

Date: September 24, 2026

Time & Format: 9-10 am and 6-7 pm, Virtual
Topic: Annual Title I Meeting, Student Handbook Review, Middle School House System update, 26-27 SY SIP Goals, Admin Q&A

Date: November 19, 2026

Time & Format: TBD, In-Person
Topic: SciTech STEM Festival

Date: October 12, 2026

Time & Format: 11am – 7 pm

Topic: Parent Teacher Conferences and Parent & Family Engagement Policy Review

Date: December 17, 2026

Time & Format: 1:30 – 2:30 pm, In-Person
Topic: Parent Engagement Event

Date: January 28, 2027

Time & Format: 9-10 am and 6-7 pm, Virtual
Topic: 2027-2028 Course Offerings and Scheduling

Date: March 18, 2027

Time & Format: 1:30 – 2:30 pm, In-Person
Topic: Parent Engagement Event

Date: May 14th

Time & Format: TBD
Topic: TAFTSD Carnival

Date: February 25, 2027

Time & Format: 9-10:15 am, Virtual
Topic: Student Service Support

Date: April 22, 2027

Time & Format: 9-10 am and 6-7 pm, Virtual
Topic: Parent Feedback, Review of 26-27 SIP, Admin Q&A

SciTech Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)

The SciTech PTO (Parent-Teacher Organization) Board warmly welcomes all new and returning families to Pittsburgh SciTech! The PTO is an all-volunteer group of parents, teachers (and sometimes students) who work together to support the school and promote family engagement.

Participation

Everyone is welcome and encouraged to attend our monthly meetings. Being a part of the PTO does not mean you have to volunteer or donate money – BUT the more participation we have, the stronger our community will be. Many parents feel they cannot participate because they are still learning English, or because they work full time. Please don't let that discourage you. Whether you have 30 minutes or a few hours, your time, your ideas, your talents, your connections and your voice are truly needed and appreciated!

Fundraising for Teachers and Students

A big part of what the PTO does is fundraise to help pay for things that are traditionally underfunded. This includes student groups, field trips, school events and classroom support. Last year, the PTO funded lots of requests from teachers and student groups including Homecoming, Robotics team, Interact Club, BSU, GSA, field days, and Pi Day! We also help fund and support SciTech's annual STEM Fest in the fall, Staff Appreciation Week in May, and the Carnival in June.

SciTech Gear

The SciTech PTO Fall Gear Sale is open until September 30th. Get your T-shirts, sweatshirts, and SciTech gear! Visit the online store to choose items and pay. Items will be delivered to your student at school around

Oct 20. <https://scitechspiritwearfall2025.itemorder.com/shop/closed/>

The PTO leadership team is always available for families to reach out info@scitechpto.org.

Volunteer

All school volunteers who will be responsible for the welfare of students or who will have direct contact with students are required to submit volunteer clearances per PPS Policy 920. Required clearances include: PA Child Abuse, PA Criminal and Federal Criminal History (Fingerprints) OR the Residency Verification Form and Waiver Request in lieu of the federal fingerprints for volunteers who have resided in PA for 10 consecutive years. All clearances must be less than five years old. Find more information on the clearance process here: www.pghschools.org/community/get-involved/volunteering

Volunteer Opportunities at SciTech

- Lunchroom Monitor
- Copying Documents
- Offering Activities During Activity Period with Staff
- Chaperone Field Trips

If you have obtained your clearances and are interested in volunteering for anything above, please reach out to Mr. Chambers SciTech, FACE Coordinator at wchambers1@pghschools.org

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Dual Enrollment/Advanced Placement (AP) Courses

CHS Courses at Pittsburgh SciTech

College in High School (CHS) courses are dual-enrollment classes that allow high school students to earn both high school and college credit simultaneously. Offered through partnerships between high schools and colleges or universities—University of Pittsburgh, Seton Hill and LaRoche College—CHS courses are taught at the high school by certified teachers using a college-level syllabus and assessments approved by the sponsoring institution.

Benefits of CHS Courses

- **College Credit While in High School:** Students earn real college credit, often at a fraction of the cost. This can lead to significant savings on future tuition and potentially reduce the time it takes to earn a college degree.
- **Academic Challenge and College Readiness:** CHS courses offer rigorous content that prepares students for the expectations of college-level work. Students develop critical thinking, analytical writing, research, and time management skills in a supportive environment.
- **Smoother Transition to College:** By experiencing college-level coursework while still in high school, students can build confidence, improve academic self-advocacy, and ease the transition to postsecondary education.
- **Expanded Curriculum Options:** CHS courses can provide access to a wider variety of subjects—including African American Literature—that may not be offered as AP classes or traditional electives.
- **Standout on College Applications:** Taking CHS courses signals to colleges that a student is willing to challenge themselves and can succeed in college-level work, especially when paired with strong performance.
- **Transferable Credits:** Most CHS credits are transferable to many colleges and universities, especially in-state public institutions, depending on the course and the student's final grade.
- **Equity and Access:** Unlike AP, which often relies on a single high-stakes exam, CHS credit is earned through consistent performance over the semester. This gives students more opportunities to demonstrate their learning and succeed.

Course Descriptions and Relevant Information

BIOSC 0100: Preparation for Biology University of Pittsburgh

This course focuses on a subset of major topics covered in the University of Pittsburgh courses Foundations of Biology I and II (BIOSC 0150, 0160), including a review of chemistry as it applies to biology, the structure and function of macromolecules, the basic structure

of cells, energy and cellular respiration, introduction to genetics and molecular biology, and development. While these topics are covered in high school Biology courses, Preparation for Biology delves deeper and applies chemistry concepts to achieve a more complete understanding of Biology.

Number of Credits: 3

Semester Course

Cost for Pitt Credit 2025-2026: \$245*

Prerequisites: High school biology

Requirements: Teacher Recommendation

SciTech Instructor: Dr. Edwina Kinchington ekinchington1@pghschools.org

CHEM 0110: General Chemistry 1 University of Pittsburgh

This is the first half of a two-term introduction to general chemistry. Topics include atomic theory, molarity, gases and kinetic theory, thermochemistry, electronic structure and the periodic table, relationships between phases, ionic solutions and acid/base theories, redox reactions, carbon chemistry, rates of reactions, chemical equilibria, and thermodynamics. This course requires laboratory sessions and exams on the University of Pittsburgh campus.

Number of Credits: 4

Year Course

Cost for Pitt Credit 2025-2026: \$320*

Prerequisites: High school chemistry

Requirements: Teacher Recommendation

SciTech Instructor: TBD

HIS1011: U.S. History: Emergence of Mass Democracy LaRoche College

A study of the history of the United States from 1865 to 1945. This course traces the development of the United States from the aftermath of the Civil War to its emergence as a world superpower, noting the events, people and ideas involved in that development. Particular emphasis is given to Reconstruction, industrial development and World War II.

Number of Credits: 3

Semester Course

Cost for LaRoche Credit 2025-2026: \$240*

Prerequisites: None

Requirements: GPA of 2.5

SciTech Instructor: Mrs. Moore wmoore1@pghschools.org

SOCL1034 - Race & Ethnicity LaRoche College

A study of the social relationships of racial, ethnic, religious, and other minority groups, with emphasis on personal, cultural and social development.

Number of Credits: 3

Semester Course

Cost for LaRoche Credit 2025-2026: \$240*

Prerequisites: None

Requirements: GPA of 2.5

SciTech Instructor: Mrs. Moore wmoore1@pghschools.org

SEL 105: Composition and Culture A Seton Hill University

Students develop critical thinking skills in composing, reading and speaking through an examination of the relationship between culture and literacy, or the ways people use, learn, and value language. SEL 105 has a focus on critical reading and writing.

Number of Credits: 3

Semester Course

Cost for Seton Hill Credit 2025-2026: \$230*

Prerequisites: None

Requirements to take for Seton Hill Credit:

- Proficient on Keystones
- On schedule to graduate on time
- C or better in last English Course

SciTech Instructor: Mrs. Marshall imarshall1@pghschools.org

SEL 151: Topics in Literature – African American Literature Seton Hill University

Offers specialized study of a particular genre, time period, theme, region, author, or other literary/cultural phenomenon.

Number of Credits: 3

Semester Course

Cost for Seton Hill Credit 2025-2026: \$230*

Prerequisites: None

Requirements to take for Seton Hill Credit:

- Proficient on Keystones
- On schedule to graduate on time
- C or better in last English Course

SciTech Instructor: Ms. Barbas pbarbas1@pghschools.org

SPAN 0103: Intermediate Spanish 3 University of Pittsburgh

This course is Intermediate Spanish 3. High School students will take this course instead of their standard fourth-year Spanish course. This course builds on and expands the language skills acquired in the first two semesters of Spanish or Spanish 15. It is designed to develop communicative proficiency. It combines content-based language instruction with an interactive task-based approach and focuses on all relevant language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Number of Credits: 3

Year Course

Cost for Pitt Credit 2025-2026: \$245*

Prerequisites: High school chemistry

Requirements: Teacher Recommendation

SciTech Instructor: Mrs. Santana Eugui vsantanaeugui1@pghschools.org

*Note the cost is from the 2024-2025 school year and may change prior to 2025-2026 school year.

Payment Information for CHS Courses at SciTech

Once students are approved and registered for CHS courses, payment is required *only if the student chooses to take the course for college credit*. Families will receive email prompts from the partner universities with steps for payment. Courses range from \$230–\$320 for the 2025-2026 school year, depending on the university. **While students are**

welcome to take CHS courses for high school credit only, payment is only required if they opt to earn college credit. Step-by-step instructions for applying and paying will be emailed to students and families. Eligible students are encouraged to apply for scholarships through the Pittsburgh Promise and each university, but please note that CHS teachers cannot access or track scholarship application status.

CHS Courses Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Will CHS college credits transfer to other colleges after high school?

A: Many CHS credits transfer to colleges and universities, especially within Pennsylvania. However, each college makes its own decision about what credits to accept. It's best to check with the schools you're interested in attending.

Q: Is the work harder if I take the class for CHS college credit?

A: No. Whether or not you choose to register for college credit, you will do the same assignments, projects, and assessments. The course is taught at a college level for all students, so everyone benefits from the challenge and preparation—even if they don't pay for the credit.

Q: How similar is a CHS class to what my child will experience in college?

A: Very similar. CHS courses are designed in partnership with universities. They follow college-level syllabi, use college-approved materials, and are graded with the same expectations as first-year college courses. Students are expected to engage in deeper reading, writing, research, and discussion than in typical high school classes. The difference is that CHS classes are taught by SciTech teachers who offer more personalized support and structure to help students adjust to the rigor of college-level work. It's a great "bridge" that helps students build confidence, habits, and skills they'll need to succeed in higher education.

Q: What Supports Do CHS Teachers Offer for supporting Student Success?

A: CHS teachers at SciTech are committed to helping every student succeed in these college-level courses. They offer a variety of supports, including clear weekly agendas, step-by-step guidance through assignments, and regular check-ins to monitor student progress. Teachers provide individualized feedback on writing and projects, offer office hours or small-group help sessions, and scaffold complex readings with tools like guided notes, vocabulary previews, and discussion-based learning. They also walk students through the college registration and scholarship process, ensuring both students and families understand expectations.

CHS vs. AP – What's the Difference?

Q: What is the main difference between CHS and AP classes?

A: CHS (College in High School) classes allow you to earn college credit *during the course* by enrolling with a partner university and successfully completing the class. AP (Advanced

Placement) classes prepare you to earn college credit *based on your score on a national AP Exam* at the end of the year.

Q: How do I earn college credit in a CHS class?

A: You register through the partnering university (like Pitt, LaRoche, or Seton Hill), complete the class with a passing grade, and pay a fee. If you meet all the requirements, you receive a college transcript with credits—even if you don’t take an exam.

Q: How do I earn college credit in an AP class?

A: You must take the AP Exam in May and score high enough (usually a 3, 4, or 5) for a college to grant credit. Each college sets its own policy on what scores they accept for credit.

Q: Is one option better than the other?

A: Not necessarily—it depends on your goals and learning style. CHS is great if you prefer consistent feedback, project-based learning, and earning credit based on your full-year performance. AP might be a better fit if you’re a strong test-taker and are aiming for highly selective colleges that have well-known AP credit policies.

**For questions on CHS Courses at SciTech please reach out to
Ms. Wendy Moore at wmoore1@pghschools.org.**

AP Courses at SciTech

College Board Advanced Placement (AP) courses are college-level classes offered in high schools that give students the opportunity to challenge themselves academically and potentially earn college credit. Each course ends with a standardized AP Exam in May, and high scores may qualify students for advanced placement or credit at many colleges and universities. These courses help students develop critical thinking, time management, and subject-specific skills that prepare them for success in college and beyond.

Benefits of AP Courses

1. **College Credit and Placement:** Scoring well on AP Exams can earn students college credits or allow them to skip introductory college courses, saving time and money.
2. **Academic Challenge:** AP classes are rigorous and help students build critical thinking, writing, and problem-solving skills that prepare them for college-level work.
3. **College Admissions:** Taking AP courses demonstrates a student’s motivation and ability to handle challenging coursework, which can strengthen college applications.
4. **Exploration of Interests:** AP courses allow students to explore subjects in depth, helping them identify potential college majors or career paths.

Cost Information

Students who elect to take the end-of-course exam in May are responsible for the cost of the exam, which was \$99 in 2026. Payments are due at the end of April. Prior to that, students can earn exam fee reductions of 6% per hour for each hour that they spend preparing for the exam with their teacher. Students can speak to their AP teacher to determine what opportunities for fee reduction are available.

Course Descriptions and Relevant Information

AP 2-D Art and Design: Students create a portfolio of original two-dimensional artworks that demonstrate principles like unity, balance, and contrast using a variety of materials and techniques.

AP African American Studies: Offers an interdisciplinary exploration of African American history, culture, politics, and contributions from the African continent to the present day in the United States

AP English Language and Composition: (11th grade option) Focuses on analyzing nonfiction texts and writing persuasive, evidence-based essays to develop rhetorical and analytical writing skills

AP English Literature and Composition: (12th grade option) Emphasizes close reading and analysis of literary texts, including fiction, poetry, and drama, to explore themes, style, and literary techniques.

AP Calculus AB: (can be taken after pre-calculus) Introduces the concepts of limits, derivatives, and integrals and their real-world applications.

AP Calculus BC: (can be taken after pre-calculus) Includes all topics in AB plus additional content such as series, parametric equations, and polar coordinates for a more advanced calculus experience.

AP Statistics: Covers collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data, including probability, regression, and hypothesis testing.

AP Computer Science Principles: (Spring semester 10th grade course in the Computers & Connections concentration) Introduces the broad field of computer science, covering programming, data analysis, the internet, and the societal impact of technology.

AP Computer Science A: (Spring semester 11th grade course in the Computers & Connections concentration) Focuses on programming in Java and problem-solving using algorithms, data structures, and object-oriented programming concepts.

AP Biology: (Spring semester 11th grade course in the Body & Behavior concentration) Investigates core biological principles such as evolution, cellular processes, genetics, and ecosystems, with an emphasis on scientific inquiry and lab work.

AP Environmental Science: (Spring semester 11th grade course in the Environment & Energy concentration) Explores ecological systems, human impact on the planet, and sustainable practices, integrating science with real-world environmental issues.

AP Physics 1: (Course for students NOT in the Form & Function concentration AND an option for 11th grade students to take if they are in the Form & Function concentration) An algebra-based course that introduces Newtonian mechanics, energy, waves, and basic electric circuits.

AP Physics C: Mechanics: (Course for students who have taken calculus OR who are concurrently taking calculus) A calculus-based course that deeply examines Newtonian mechanics, including motion, force, energy, and rotational dynamics.

**For questions about AP Courses at SciTech please reach out to
Julie Lazzaro at jlazzaro1@pghschools.org.**

APPENDIX

Policy 115 – Homework

This policy establishes expectations for meaningful, purposeful homework aligned to instructional goals. Homework should reinforce learning, be developmentally appropriate, and not excessive.

Policy 119 – Athletics & Extracurricular Activities

This policy governs student participation in athletics and extracurricular activities, including eligibility, academic expectations, conduct standards, and equitable access to programs.

Policy 204 – Attendance

Students are required to attend school regularly in accordance with Pennsylvania law. The policy outlines excused and unexcused absences, documentation, and procedures to support consistent attendance.

Policy 206 – Health Services

Outlines school health services including screenings, medical support, and procedures that ensure student health, safety, and readiness to learn.

Policy 209 – Grading and Reporting

Defines how student performance is assessed and communicated, including grading practices, report cards, and expectations for fairness and consistency.

Policy 211 – Graduation Requirements

Specifies the credit requirements and criteria students must meet to earn a diploma, aligned with state regulations.

Policy 212 – Student Code of Conduct

Establishes behavioral expectations and outlines disciplinary procedures to maintain a safe and respectful learning environment.

Policy 215 – Anti-Bullying

Prohibits bullying and harassment and outlines reporting, investigation, and intervention procedures to protect students.

Policy 216 – Electronic Devices

Governs student use of electronic devices. Devices may be used for educational purposes but are restricted during the school day to maintain a focused learning environment.

Policy 221 – Dress Code

Ensures student dress supports a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment while allowing appropriate self-expression.

Policy 226 – Academic Integrity

Prohibits cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic dishonesty, reinforcing ethical academic behavior.

Policy 231 – Homeless Students

Ensures educational stability and access for students experiencing homelessness in alignment with the McKinney-Vento Act. The policy outlines rights related to enrollment, transportation, and support services.

Policy 1004 – School Visitors

This policy outlines procedures for visitors entering school buildings, including sign-in requirements, identification, and approval processes to ensure a safe and secure environment for students and staff.

Annual Child Find Notice

Pittsburgh Public Schools conducts ongoing 'Child Find' activities to identify, locate, and evaluate children who may be eligible for special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). This includes children ages 3–21, including those who are homeless, wards of the state, or attending private schools. Families can request an evaluation if they suspect a disability impacting learning.



Students first
Always, in all ways.



Pittsburgh Public Schools (PPS) does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability or age in its programs, activities or employment and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. It is the policy of the Pittsburgh School District to make all services, programs and activities available and to provide reasonable accommodations to persons with disabilities. Please make requests for accommodations at least 72 hours before the scheduled event. For more information regarding accommodations, civil rights grievance procedures, please contact: Rachel Beers, Office of Employee Relations rbeers1@pghschools.org | 341 S. Bellefield Ave, Pittsburgh, PA 15213 | 412-529-HELP (4357)